Chapter 47
Army Acquisition Corps Functional Area

47–1. Unique features of Army Acquisition Corps functional area

a. Unique purpose of Army Acquisition Corps functional area. The Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) program is designed to create a professional corps of acquisition leaders willing to serve where needed and committed to developing, integrating, acquiring and fielding systems critical to decisive victory for the 21st Century. The Army Acquisition Corps (FA 51) functional area capitalizes on the operational experience of Army officers (both Active and Reserve Components) and the technical skills of Army civilians. The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) and DOD Directive 5000.52, Defense Acquisition Education, Training and Career Development Program, and DOD Instruction 5000.58, Defense Acquisition Workforce, are the governing policies for implementation of the AAC. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development and Acquisition is the proponent for FA 51.

b. Unique functions performed by Army Acquisition Corps functional area. Ultimately, the AAC develops a dedicated pool of highly qualified officers and civilian acquisition specialists. Officers and civilians develop multidisciplinary abilities to be capable of managing the total acquisition process. Placing a successful system in the hands of soldiers results from AAC members striking a balance between keen regard for operational realities and technical knowledge and expertise.

c. Unique features of work in Army Acquisition Corps functional area. FA 51 encompasses skills, responsibilities and opportunities associated with three precursor functional areas: Research, Development and Acquisition (formerly FA 51), Contracting and Industrial Management (formerly FA 97) and the Systems Automation Engineering and Systems Automation Acquisition areas of concentration from FA 53 (Information Systems Management). Accordingly, a variety of roles, duties and assignments await the AAC officer depending on the area of concentration (AOC) described below:

(1) *Systems development (AOC 51A).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of captain and major. Officers working in this AOC typically develop materiel requirements to solve battlefield deficiencies identified by combat developers. They analyze life cycle costs, affordability, force structure implications, battlefield systems integration and associated doctrine, training, logistics, organizational and materiel implications of materiel requirements and work with appropriate staff and program personnel to establish viable materiel acquisition programs. Examples of duty positions include:

(a) Combat developments staff officer.
(b) Assistant project/product manager.
(c) Matrix support officer to project manager.
(d) Assistant TRADOC system manager.

(2) *Contracting and industrial management (AOC 51C).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of captain and major. Officers serving in this career field are involved in the overall development, implementation, management and control of procurement, industrial, manufacturing and production activities. Specific responsibilities include procurement planning, determination of contract types, risk analysis, in contract formulation, negotiation, award, contract management, production, program management and other procurement functions of the Army acquisition process that provide material and services required to accomplish Army and DOD missions. Officers can expect to perform these functions at installation, system command, contract management, contingency contracting and staff assignments. Typical assignments include:

(a) Contracting officer.
(b) Chief of contracting.
(c) Procurement staff officer.
(d) Production and industrial manager.
(e) Program integrator.
(f) Assistant project/product manager.
(g) Acquisition commander. (Major, not centrally selected.) Officers serving in any of the above duties may have the opportunity to receive a contracting officer's warrant. Contracting officer warrants permit the officer to legally obligate the U.S. Government through binding contractual agreements. Officers should ensure that a copy of every warrant held is included in their personnel file.

(3) *Systems automation engineering and acquisition (AOC 51R).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of captain and major. These officers are critical to the success of the integration and leveraging of information technology to provide increased warfighting capability for the 21st century. Officers in this field are branch qualified, acquisition trained and typically possess degrees in computer science, information systems, software engineering, electrical engineering, information technology, or related disciplines. The 51R officer is involved in all aspects of acquisition and technology to include the research, engineering and systems integration of information technology. He or she participates from mission analysis and concept development through evaluation of competing technological approaches to battlefield systems integration and post-deployment software support. Officers provide expertise in the management and implementation of areas involving software engineering, simulation and modeling, information networks, computer systems, technical and systems architectures, and systems integration. Officers are expected to maintain awareness of advances in emerging information technologies, and evaluate and assess competing technological approaches that may affect Army systems and capabilities. Examples of duty positions include:

(a) Assistant project/product manager.
(b) Assistant TRADOC system manager.
(c) Software/systems engineer.
(d) Systems analyst.
(e) Computer scientist.
(f) Combat developments staff officer.
(g) Automation staff officer.

(4) *Research and engineering (AOC 51S).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of captain and major. Officers working in this field are usually degreed engineers and scientists performing systems planning, research and development or other engineering tasks. Officers serve as managers or technical specialists directly supporting acquisition programs, projects or activities. They manage the research and development of materiel during the initial phases of the acquisition life cycle. Officers ensure proper interface between the system design and support programs, monitor system development to ensure the system design and characteristics satisfy operational requirements while remaining within schedule and cost constraints. They supervise the formulation, justification and execution of the research and development portion of the budget, coordinate the efforts of combined military and commercial research and development programs, and work with industry on matters of policy and project planning. Most participants in the Army engineers and scientists program will be assigned this AOC. Examples of duty positions include:

(a) Research engineer or scientist.
(b) Research and development coordinator.
(c) Research and development staff/project officer.
(d) Assistant product/project manager.
(e) Instructor and research director, USMA.
(f) Director of research and development.

(5) *Test and evaluation (AOC 51T).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of captain and major. These officers plan, design, monitor and document experiments and tests under conditions ranging from highly controlled scientific experiments to realistic free-play exercises in an operational environment. Officers coordinate and schedule all resources for the test, design automated data processing support plans and instrumentation, and conduct or control the test to achieve the objectives. They produce the test report, evaluate test data and assess the performance, utility, military suitability and effectiveness of systems under test. Examples of duty positions include:

(a) Test and evaluation staff/project officer.

(b) Test and evaluation coordinator.
(c) Assistant project/product manager for test.
(d) Test director.
(e) Test board president.
(f) Test pilot.

(6) *Acquisition (AOC 51Z).* This AOC is used only with the ranks of lieutenant colonel and colonel. This is the critical capstone AOC for FA 51. These officers have a broad base of acquisition knowledge and experience. They possess a thorough understanding of how the life cycle systems management model interrelates with the concept based requirements system and the planning, programming, budgeting and execution system. These officers lead and manage both government and industry workers from multiple acquisition career fields and organizations. Typical assignments may include:

(a) Project/product manager.
(b) Deputy project manager or program executive officer.
(c) Director or chief of contracting.
(d) Principle agent responsible for contracting.
(e) Director on ASA(RDA) or OSD acquisition related staff.
(f) Commander of Laboratory, Research and Engineering Center, Proving Ground or Contracting Command. The program concentrates on developing AAC members to fill critical acquisition positions. Occupying these positions requires training, education and experience as stated in the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act and DOD 5000.52-M, Acquisition Career Development Program. Only AAC officers and civilians certified as meeting the DAWIA and DOD 5000.52-M requirements may obtain assignment to these critical positions. While this chapter outlines the leader development model for officers, chapter 5 of AR 690-950 shows AAC career development for each civilian career path.

d. Army Acquisition Corps officer certifications. The AAC officer provides the leadership, expertise and management ability necessary to accomplish demanding acquisition objectives in a timely, efficient and cost-effective manner. The AAC officer must be fully qualified at all grades to combine the functions of research and development, financial estimating and control, procurement, manufacturing and production, testing, and integrated logistics support and to lead a team of government (military and civilian) and industry personnel to accomplish program objectives within the designated time, cost and performance constraints.

(1) *Certification requirements for career field and career level.*

(a) An AAC officer can be certified in 8 of the 12 acquisition career fields named by DOD: program management; communications-computer systems; contracting; systems planning, research, development, and engineering; test and evaluation engineering; manufacturing and production; quality assurance; and acquisition logistics. In addition, three career levels are used for the purpose of characterizing an acquisition officer's qualifications within a given career field.

(b) The DOD has established experience, education and training requirements for each acquisition career field. In general, each career field requires 12 months of experience for level 1, 24 months for level 2 and 48 months for level 3. The appendices to DOD 5000.52-M prescribe the specific requirements for each career field. Credit is given for acquisition experience prior to accession into the AAC. Service in wholesale logistics positions and field positions that deal with the wholesale level (such as maintenance control officer and logistics staff officer) can usually be credited against the experience requirement. Also, not more than 12 months spent pursuing a program of academic education or training may be counted toward fulfillment of the acquisition experience requirement.

(c) Each acquisition position on the Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL) has a career field and career level requirement associated with it. Officers should meet position requirements prior to assignment; however, where this is not possible, captains and majors have 18 months in which to meet position requirements, and lieutenant colonels and above have 6 months in which to meet position requirements. In general, captain positions are level 1; major positions are level 2; and lieutenant colonel and above positions are level 3.

(2) Army Acquisition Corps career field level 3 certification and product or project manager qualification requirements.

(a) The purpose of AAC career field level 3 certification and product or project manager qualification requirements is to identify those officers who have achieved the requisite level of education, training and experience to serve in acquisition critical positions and be selected for product or project manager. Certification supports implementation of the requirements contained in Title 10 of the U.S. Code and DOD 5000.52-M.

(b) As stipulated in DAWIA, only an Acquisition Corps member may fill a critical acquisition position. The act also stipulates that prior to obtaining assignment to duty as a program or deputy program manager of a major defense acquisition program, an officer must:

1. Have successfully completed the Advanced Program Management Course (APMC) at the Defense System Management College (DSMC) or a management program at an educational institution determined to be comparable by the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology (USD(A&T)).

2. Execute a written agreement to remain on active duty in that position at least until completion of the first major milestone that occurs closest in time to the date on which the person has served in the position for 4 years.

3. Have at least 8 years of experience in acquisition, at least 2 of which were performed in a systems program office or similar organization.

(c) The DAWIA stipulates that prior to obtaining assignment to duty as a program manager or deputy program manager of a significant non-major defense acquisition program, an officer must:

1. Have successfully completed the APMC at DSMC or a management program at an educational institution determined to be comparable by the USD(A&T).

2. Have at least 6 years of experience in acquisition.

(d) All eligible promotable majors and lieutenant colonels are considered for the lieutenant colonel level of product or project manager and acquisition command positions. All eligible promotable lieutenant colonels and colonels are considered for the colonel level of product or project manager and acquisition command positions. The following is a list of product or project manager and acquisition commander qualification standards:

(e) Major (promotable) or lieutenant colonel:

1. MEL 4 graduate; APMC graduate (desirable).
2. Level 3 certified in at least two acquisition career fields.
3. Degree in a technical, scientific, business or managerial field.
4. At least 4 years of experience in acquisition, at least one of which was performed while assigned to a systems program office or similar organization. Not more than 12 months spent pursuing a program of academic education or training may be counted toward fulfillment of the acquisition experience requirement.
5. Outstanding performance of duty.

(f) Lieutenant colonel (promotable) or colonel:

1. MEL 4 graduate.
2. APMC graduate.
3. Level 3 certified in at least two acquisition career fields.
4. Degree in a technical, scientific, business or managerial field.
5. At least 8 years of experience in acquisition, at least 2 of which were performed while assigned to a systems program office or similar organization. Not more than 12 months spent pursuing a program of academic training or education may be counted toward fulfillment of the acquisition experience requirement.
6. Outstanding performance of duty.

(3) The training, education and experience requirements mandated in the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act and Army policy preclude TOE command by AAC officers. Army Acquisition Corps officers compete for acquisition commands and product and project manager positions that equate to battalion and brigade level commands respectively.

47–2. Officer characteristics required

a. Competencies and actions common to all. Army officers must be premier warfighters who can effectively apply the four core dimensions of leadership: values, attributes, skills and actions. (For additional discussion of these leadership dimensions, see FM 22-100.) The four core leadership dimensions provide the basis for what a leader must be, know and do. The values and attributes set the basis for the character of the leader - what a leader must be. The skills developed by leaders establish his or her competence - what a leader must know. The actions that leaders conduct and execute constitute leadership - what a leader must do. The leadership framework describes a leader of character and competence who acts to achieve excellence across the spectrum of operations from total war, to operations other than war, to disaster relief and in times of peace.

(1) *Values.* Values are at the core of everything the Army is and does. The Army is an institution of people with unique and enduring values. These values must be a part of the men and women—officers, enlisted personnel and civilians—who are the Army. These values provide the sense of purpose necessary to sustain our soldiers in combat and help resolve ambiguities in operations other than war. Officers must establish and maintain an environment in the Army where soldiers and civilians do what is right; where we treat each other as they should be treated; and, where everyone can be all they can be. There are seven Army values (LDRSHIP).

(a) Loyalty. Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit and other soldiers.

(b) Duty. Fulfill your obligations.

(c) Respect. Treat people as they should be treated.

(d) Selfless-service. Put the welfare of the nation, the Army and your subordinates before your own.

(e) Honor. Live up to all the Army values.

(f) Integrity. Do what's right, legally and morally.

(g) Personal courage. Face fear, danger or adversity (physical or moral) with the spirit and determination of a warfighter.

(2) *Leader attributes.* Attributes are fundamental qualities and characteristics. Attributes assist in defining what an officer should be and contribute to leader actions. Army leader attributes are described in three categories - mental, physical and emotional.

(a) Mental attributes describe aptitudes and capacities for learning that leaders should possess and develop. Included in this category are will, self-discipline, initiative, judgment, confidence, intelligence and cultural awareness.

(b) Physical attributes specify physical dispositions or aptitudes that can be nurtured and developed. Included in this category are health fitness, physical fitness, stamina, military bearing and professional bearing.

(c) Emotional attributes are those affective aptitudes or capacities that contribute to how one feels and substantially contribute to leadership. Included in this category are self-control, balance and stability.

(3) *Leader skills.* Skills are synonymous with competencies. They are abilities or competencies that one develops and uses with people, with ideas and with things. Competence is of primary importance for all Army officers. The Army recognizes that officers must develop four types of skills.

(a) Interpersonal skills reflect competence in communicating with people.

(b) Conceptual skills refer to competence in handling ideas.

(c) Technical skills reflect competence with things.

(d) Tactical skills refer to the ability to put together technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills and apply them to warfighting tasks.

(4) *Leader actions.* Officers provide purpose, direction and motivation as they influence their subordinates, operate to accomplish their mission and strive to improve their unit or organization. Leader actions are how Army officers act to achieve excellence and get the job done. These actions are applicable across all levels of leadership.

(a) Influencing refers to the use of appropriate people skills to guide subordinates or teams toward mission accomplishment. Influencing subdivides into communicating, decision-making and motivating.

(b) Operating or accomplishing the mission refers to the relative short term actions of getting the job done. Operating divides into planning, executing and assessing.

(c) Improving refers to the long term investment-type actions essential to improving everything the leader influences. Improving subdivides into developing (people), building (teams) and learning.

b. Unique skills. FA 51 officers must possess highly developed technical and managerial skills. These skills are obtained through a combination of military and civilian schooling and experience which lead to the certifications addressed in paragraph 47-1d. Further grade specific information is contained within the professional development section of this chapter. (See paragraph 47-7)

c. Unique knowledge. FA 51 Officers must thoroughly understand the relationship of doctrine, training, leadership, organizations, materiel and soldiers when viewing any issue. They must understand and be as conversant with Army doctrine as with the technology with which they work. FA 51 officers will progress from a specific and detailed knowledge of an individual AOC (contracting; research and engineering; systems development; test and evaluation; systems automation engineering and systems automation acquisition) to a familiarity with all and a certification in at least two AOCs. The FA 51 officer must stay abreast and be able to recognize emerging technical innovations and practices within industry and among governmental and non-governmental organizations worldwide.

d. Unique attributes. Given the rapid advances in technology and the ever changing nature of the threat to our national defense, FA 51 officers must be warfighters with the traditional officer attributes of duty, honor, integrity, discretion and professional ethic, and a consciousness of national policy and the state of technology affecting our forces. Army Acquisition Corps officers must be able to analyze and distill nuances in both areas for implications to our modernization efforts.

e. Accessions and applications requirements. The implications of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) dictate specific knowledge and experience factors for AAC officers and necessitate a unique application and accession process.

(1) Since the AAC program is requirements driven, the number of officers selected is based on both validated and projected Army requirements by year group, grade, branch and AOC within FA 51. Officers who meet the following criteria are designated or may apply:

(a) In the grade of captain through colonel.

(b) Branch qualified at the grade of captain.

(c) Graduated from the branch Officer Advanced Course and completed CAS3 (MEL N).

(d) For captain and major grades, able to meet career field and level certification criteria (DOD 5000.52-M) within 18 months after accession and assignment to an acquisition developmental position.

(e) For major (promotable), lieutenant colonel and colonel grades, able to meet career field and level certification criteria within 6 months after accession and assignment to an acquisition-critical position.

(f) Have at least 4 years active federal commissioned service (AFCS) remaining.

(g) Possess MEL appropriate to grade.

(h) Have demonstrated outstanding performance and potential.

(i) Have approval from their current control branch or functional area.

(2) Letters of application or nomination should clearly address all criteria in paragraph 47-2e(1) and other pertinent data the officer wishes to have considered. The applicant's immediate superior should endorse the application and forward it through the Commander, U.S. Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM), ATTN: TAPC-OPB-C, 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22332-0411, to Commander, PERSCOM, ATTN (appropriate officer assignment branch) 200 Stovall Street Alexandria, Virginia 22332-

0411. The next regularly scheduled acquisition accession board reviews both nominations and applications. Officers receive notification by letter regarding their selection status. Nonselection does not preclude reapplying in the future.

(3) Upon acceptance, an AAC officer's career is dedicated to repetitive developmental acquisition tours. The officer attends acquisition schooling and obtains acquisition experience to become AAC career field and career level certified. The officer may be offered the opportunity to attend Advanced Civil Schooling at the 8th year initial accession point. Most officers will be assigned immediately after accession to their first acquisition position. Those officers whose manner of performance continues to warrant Advanced Civil Schooling will be afforded that opportunity after their initial acquisition assignment.

(4) The probability of accomplishing the AAC certification and career field and career level requirements decreases with an officer's increasing time in service at entry into the AAC. Promotable majors and above applying for entry into the AAC are expected to meet general entry criteria as well as possess appropriate AAC military education and previous acquisition assignment experience. This will enable them to qualify for assignment to critical acquisition positions under the certification criteria of paragraph 47-1e within 6 months after accession and assignment, and meet DAWIA certifications within 18 months.

(5) An AAC officer's career development consists of the following three phases: branch qualification, development and critical acquisition. Successful progress through all phases provides the Army with technically proficient and experienced leaders to serve at the highest levels of the material acquisition management profession.

(6) Before officers can be Corps certified, DAWIA mandates that they must fulfill the following requirements.

(a) Be a major or above.

(b) Have a baccalaureate degree.

(c) Have at least 24 semester credit hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, organization, and management; or

(d) Have at least 24 semester credit hours in applicant's career field and 12 semester credit hours from among above disciplines (see (c) above).

(e) Pass the DANTES or CLEP equivalency exams for (c) or (d) above.

(f) Have at least 4 years in an acquisition position.

47–3. Critical officer developmental assignments

a. The military component of the AAC consists of a single functional area (FA 51, Acquisition) and six areas of concentration (AOC). There are six developmental AOCs (A, systems development; C, contracting and industrial management; R, systems automation engineering and acquisition; S, research and engineering; and, T, test and evaluation) for the captain and major grades, and one critical capstone AOC (Z, acquisition) for the lieutenant colonel and colonel grades. Descriptions of each FA 51 AOC are provided in paragraph 47-1c. At their 8th year of Active Federal Commissioned Service (AFCS), officers are designated by their branch or may apply for entry into the AAC. Officers are accessed into the Corps from all branches.

b. Officers accessed into the AAC at their 8th year of service are designated as Acquisition candidate officers working in any one of the five developmental AOCs. During the developmental years, officers should work toward Corps certification and level qualification in at least two AOCs. For example, certification in systems development (A) and contracting and industrial management (C) prepare an officer for critical positions such as project manager or contracting commander. Likewise, systems automation engineering and acquisition (R) and test and evaluation (T) prepare an officer for critical positions such as software development commander and project manager. There are many other successful combinations, but clearly, officers with a multifunctional background best fill critical acquisition positions (lieutenant colonel and colonel level). When they meet all Corps certification requirements in two developmental AOC, officers are designated as certified Army Acquisition Corps members and their AOC changes to Z, acquisition. When they fulfill the experience, education and training requirements for a particular AAC career field and level, PERSCOM certifies them for levels 1 and 2, and the director, acquisition career management (DACM), certifies them for level 3.

c. The 30 year leader development career path for AAC officers is divided into phases.

(1) The branch qualification phase normally consists of the first 8 years of AFCS. During this phase, officers develop basic branch skills, achieve company grade branch qualification, and develop a firm base of warfighting knowledge. Generally, branch qualification means successful company, battery or troop command and successful completion of the branch basic and Captains Career Course. It is important for officers to have experience with soldiers and systems, and with equipment they will eventually develop and acquire for the Army. This phase precedes development of AAC skills and is fundamental to the success of Acquisition officers.

(2) The AAC developmental phase runs from approximately the 8th year through the 16th year of AFCS or from captain through major. Upon selection into the AAC, officers in this phase receive skill specific training and serve in AAC developmental positions. Basic acquisition training occurs at the U.S. Army Logistics Management College (ALMC) at Fort Lee, Virginia, for all AAC officers. In addition, initial systems automation training occurs at Fort Gordon, Georgia, for those officers assigned AOC 51R. In developmental positions, officers gain the knowledge and experience needed to become proficient materiel acquisition managers. These positions are directly associated with their developmental AOCs (A, C, R, S and T). During the developmental years, officers should work toward Corps certification and level qualification in at least two AOCs. While at resident Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the AAC Focus Program affords AAC student officers an opportunity to complete mandatory acquisition courses required for certification in several developmental AOCs. In FY 98, the AAC Focus Program expanded to provide AAC officers with an opportunity to complete a graduate degree in an acquisition related discipline during their year at resident CGSC.

(3) Sometime between their 15th and 17th years of AFCS, officers are normally sent to the Advanced Program Management Course (APMC) at the Defense Systems Management College (DSMC) or to a management program at a comparable accredited educational institution approved by the USD(A&T). The program goal is to send all AAC officers to APMC.

(4) The Acquisition critical phase runs from approximately the 17th year of AFCS or from promotion to lieutenant colonel through the remainder of the officer's career. It specifically begins when an officer is Corps certified, becomes career level 3 qualified in two or more Acquisition career fields, and is promotable to lieutenant colonel. During this phase, AAC officers receive varied and demanding assignments requiring broad AAC skills. The DAWIA mandates that officers filling critical AAC positions shall be assigned to positions for not less than 3 years unless the assignment period is waived by the Director of Acquisition Career Management.

(5) Once officers meet the experience, education and training requirements for level 3 in a particular AAC career field, they are certified to hold a critical acquisition position in that career field. They are eligible to compete for selection as a product or project manager or as an acquisition commander. All officers continue to serve in critical acquisition positions; those selected for Senior Service College attend in residence or complete the U.S. Army War College Distance Education Course. On completion of 8 years of acquisition experience (2 of which must have been in a systems program office or similar organization) and completion of the APMC or a management program at a comparable USD(A&T) approved institution, officers then are eligible for selection as a project manager of a major defense acquisition program.

d. Professional development objectives for AAC officers are:

(1) *Captain.*

(a) Complete development in a branch specialty and begin development of AAC knowledge, technical competency, and leadership and managerial skills.

(b) Complete both phases of a branch Captains Career Course (MEL 6 and MEL N).

(c) Attain an advanced degree in a business, technical, scientific or managerial field (civilian education level (CEL) 2).

(d) Attend the Materiel Acquisition Management (MAM) course and complete applicable career field level 1 mandatory training courses.

(e) (Optional) Training With Industry (TWI) (see AR 621-1).

(f) Obtain the following key assignments: product or project manager staff officer; matrix support officer to product or project manager; combat development officer in proponent school, doctrine or integration center; contracting officer; contingency contracting officer; program integrator; contract administrator or production officer; software engineer; and automation systems engineers.

(2) *Major*.

(a) Pursue advanced development in AAC. Emphasis should be directed towards achieving enhanced knowledge, technical competence and leadership and managerial skills.

(b) Complete resident or nonresident CSC (MEL 4). Attendance at resident CGSC, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, offers special opportunities for AAC officers. The AAC Focus Program affords AAC student officers an opportunity to complete mandatory acquisition courses required for certification in several developmental AOC. It also provides selected AAC officers with an opportunity to complete a graduate degree in an acquisition related discipline during their year at resident CGSC.

(c) Pursue AAC related graduate study (CEL 2 strongly recommended). Officers who did not attend fully funded ACS should pursue an advanced degree in a technical, scientific or managerial field.

(d) Attend career field level 2 mandatory training courses.

(e) (Optional) TWI. (See AR 621-1)

(f) Complete key assignments: product or project manager staff officer; matrix support officer to product or project manager; combat development officer in proponent school, doctrine, or integration center; procurement or contracting officer; production officer; fielding officer; program integrator; senior software engineer; research officer; and assistant project manager. Every effort should be made to ensure that one acquisition assignment in this time period is operationally related. Assignments in materiel fielding, division or corps force modernization, contingency contracting at division, corps or Army level, and operational testing help keep AAC officers current in the operational art and sensitive to the needs of the warfighter.

(3) *Lieutenant colonel.*

(a) Meet DOD 5000.52-M career field level 3 experience, education and training requirements.

(b) Complete the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Army War College or other MEL 1 producing courses.

(c) Complete acquisition related graduate degree (CEL 2). Officers who did not attend fully funded ACS should complete an advanced degree in a technical, scientific, business or managerial field.

(d) Attend the APMC at DSMC (or a USD(A&T) approved comparable management program) if not previously completed, followed by a third AAC assignment. Attendance is mandatory to be a product manager.

(e) (Optional) TWI. (See AR 621-1)

(f) Complete key assignments: product manager (battalion command equivalent); Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research, Development, and Acquisition (ASA(RDA)) branch level chief; Army staff (ARSTAF) branch level chief; Director of Information Systems for Command, Control, Communications and Computers (DISC4) branch level chief; ASA(RDA), ARSTAF or DISC4 action officer; and acquisition commander (e.g., research and development laboratory commander, procurement commander).

(4) *Colonel.*

(a) Meet DOD 5000.52-M career field level 3 experience, education and training requirements.

(b) Make maximum use of expertise and experience in program manager (PM) and other critical acquisition positions.

(c) Complete the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Army War College or other MEL 1 producing courses.

(d) Pursue, at this level, civilian academic opportunities directly related to specific duty position requirements. Short course and seminar study programs may be available as required for specific duty positions.

(e) Pursue available acquisition related training:

1. Executive Program Manager's Course (DSMC).

2. Executive Contracting (DAU).

3. Executive Acquisition Logistics Management (NPS).

4. Total quality management course (DSMC or other institutions).

5. Functional area mandatory training in accordance with DOD 5000.52-M.

(f) Attend the APMC at DSMC (or a management program at a comparable USD(A&T) approved educational institution) if not previously completed. Attendance is mandatory to be a project manager.

(g) Complete key assignments: project manager (brigade command equivalent), acquisition commander (e.g., proving grounds; laboratories, research, development, and engineering centers; and procurement), and ASA(RDA) and ARSTAF directorate level chief.

(h) Complete 8 years of acquisition experience (of which 2 must be in a systems program office or similar organization) as required for selection as project manager of a major defense acquisition program.

e. Branch/functional area generalist assignments. FA 51 officers are assigned only to positions on an approved Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL). Therefore, they do not receive assignments to branch/functional area generalist positions after accession into the Corps.

f. Joint assignments. Army Acquisition Corps officers can expect to be considered for joint duty assignments since over twenty percent of AAC billets are joint duty authorizations. However, FA 51 officers are exempt under the Secretary of Defense Scientific and Technical waiver category from the joint duty requirement in Title IV of the DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 for eligibility for promotion to brigadier general.

47–4. Assignment preferences and precedence

Due to the constraints of statute and policy, and the close correlation between critical Acquisition positions and AAC officer inventory, the assignment sequencing required for multiple AOC certifications and AAC level 3 certification at lieutenant colonel require careful planning and attention to an officer's qualifications and expertise. Accordingly, the assignment sequencing in FA 51 is more rigid than a basic branch. Use of the AAC life cycle model (see fig 47-1) and close communication with the Acquisition Management Branch at PERSCOM will assist the officer in career and assignment planning.

a. Preferences. FA 51 has diverse opportunities and actually requires multiple career development paths within the functional area. The FA 51 program concentrates on developing AAC members to fill critical Acquisition positions. Occupying these positions requires training, education and experience as stated in the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act and DOD 5000.52-M. Only AAC officers and civilians certified as meeting the DAWIA and DOD 5000.52-M requirements may obtain assignment to these critical positions. Requests from officers for assignments that do not contribute to achieving that goal will likely be rejected.

b. Precedence. Assignment to developmental functional area positions will have precedence, although there is some flexibility on the sequence of assignments. Some FA 51 billets are designated as requiring advanced education, either military or civilian. Officers assigned to those positions must possess the requisite skills or education.

47–5. Duration of critical officer life cycle assignments

a. Assignment duration. Most assignments for Army Acquisition Corps officers will be 24 to 36 months in length. Officers should strive to achieve a variety of experiences within each assignment, consistent with certification requirements. OCONUS locations will continue to require specific tour lengths.

b. Army Acquisition Corps functional area life cycle model. Figure 47-1 displays a FA 51 life cycle with functional area qualifying and developmental positions.

47–6. Requirements, authorizations and inventory

a. Goal. The goal is to provide technically superior officers with the requisite certifications to satisfy regulatory mandates to manage our most critical defense acquisition programs. Concurrently, we must maintain a healthy, viable career path for AAC officers. To do this, assignments must be optimized in order to fulfill critical positions while providing officers sufficient time for AOC certification prior to promotion to lieutenant colonel and colonel.

b. OPMS XXI implementation. Acquisition Corps officers serve in critical acquisition positions identified on the Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL). Membership in the AAC closely correlates with the number of authorized positions on the MAPL, by grade. Officers desiring more information on current authorizations or inventory should contact either the Acquisition Career Management Office functional proponent or their AAC assignment officer at PERSCOM.

47–7. Key officer life cycle initiatives for Army Acquisition Corps

a. Structure. Army Acquisition Corps officers serve within all acquisition, combat development and research facilities worldwide. FA 51 positions exist in TRADOC, Army Materiel Command, Defense Logistics Agency, EAC headquarters staffs, joint commands and national agencies.

b. Acquire. Since the AAC program is requirements driven, the number of officers selected is based on both validated and projected Army requirements by year group, grade, branch and AOC within FA 51. Applications and accession processes are covered in paragraph 47-2.

c. Distribute. Following accession into FA 51, all officer assignments will be managed by the Acquisition Management Branch, Functional Area Management and Development Division in PERSCOM OPMD. In this branch, a single office centrally manages all AAC officers and civilians under common executive direction, policy, procedure and oversight. This concept further enhances an integrated, multidiscipline community of officers and civilians who have undergone professional development within their AAC career fields. The program ensures that AAC candidates are selected through a common set of criteria addressing competencies strongly linked to success in all acquisition related career tracks. Furthermore, it develops all candidates, both military and civilian, to the same level of certification. Finally, the AAC program centrally manages the assignments of both candidates and critical position incumbents throughout their careers.

d. Deploy. AAC officers are warfighters who remain personally and professionally prepared to deploy worldwide at all times. Whether assigned to AAC positions in CONUS or OCONUS in Army or joint services organizations, all AAC officers must be able to deploy to accomplish missions across the full spectrum of conflict. AAC officers may deploy tomorrow as a member of an AAC team; or more likely they may deploy as individuals to support joint and multinational operations other than war such as humanitarian and peace keeping missions. FA 51 officers must prepare themselves and their families for this most challenging life cycle function.

e. Sustain. Officers accessed into the Army Acquisition Corps will compete within the Operational Support Career Field for promotion to lieutenant colonel and colonel.

f. Develop. A feature of the AAC program is the goal of a master's degree in an appropriate scientific, technical, engineering or management field. After their first acquisition assignment, officers may be offered the opportunity for fully funded Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS). Attendance at a graduate school, however, is contingent on potential for academic success and whether the career timeline supports the advanced schooling. Approximately 30 percent of all AAC positions are in scientific, technical or engineering fields. Therefore, opportunities for scientific, technical or engineering master's degrees are offered to those with appropriate undergraduate backgrounds.

(1) Although officers selected to pursue MBA degrees are directed to apply and attend only business schools accredited by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, the AAC has an established master of science (MS) degree program to study systems acquisition management at the Naval Post-graduate School (NPS). For most officers, this is the preferred degree. All non-technical advanced degree programs attended by AAC officers will be nominally 12 to 18 months in length.

(2) Officers selected to pursue science and engineering degrees are directed to attend only accredited institutions that offer full-time programs. Courses of study normally require 18 to 24 months to complete, depending upon undergraduate background.

(3) Officers selected for AOC 51R pursue MS degrees in computer science or management of information systems (MIS) or a master of business administration (MBA) with an MIS concentration.

(4) Application packets for advanced schooling at a civilian institution routinely require undergraduate transcripts, Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) or Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores and an endorsed DA Form 1618-R, (Application for Detail as Student Officer at a Civilian Educational Institution or at Training with Industry). The minimum undergraduate grade point average (GPA) normally accepted is 2.5. Officers must individually arrange to take the GMAT or GRE. Applications for these exams can be obtained from the local Army education center or directly from the Education Testing Service, PO Box 6104, Princeton, New Jersey 98541-6104. Most Army education centers administer the GRE and GMAT free of charge the first time it is taken by an eligible soldier. Individual officers are responsible for arranging for this free testing through their Army education center. Specific application procedures are outlined in AR 621-1.

(5) Table 47-1 shows the preferred advanced degrees for AAC officers.

(6) On August 7, 1996, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Reform issued an interim policy on the continuing Acquisition education and training for Acquisition Workforce members. This policy establishes a requirement for 40 hours (minimum) of continuing education per certified Acquisition professional per year. Army Acquisition Corps officers are highly encouraged to continue their acquisition education and training by taking courses offered by numerous DOD and civilian institutions. Many of these courses can be found in the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) catalog.

(7) Army Acquisition Corps officers are strongly encouraged to establish and maintain dialogue with the AAC proponent office and their FA proponent office and professional development and assignment officers. Each officer is his or her own best career manager. Maintaining an open dialogue optimizes the opportunities for enhanced professional development training, education and experience.

g. Separate. FA 51 officers will separate from the Army in the same manner as all other officers.

Table 47–1
Preferred advanced degrees for ACC officers

Discipline	Degree
Business and Management	Business Administration Research Program Management Industrial Management Systems Management Procurement and Contract Management Management (General) Business (General) Information Systems Management (MS) Automated Data Processing System Management
Engineering	Engineering Administration Mechanical Engineering Operations Research Analyst (Engineering) Systems Engineering Engineering (General) Industrial Engineering Computer Science Engineering Software Engineering Computer Engineering (Artificial Intelligence)
Sciences (specific sciences determined by the Army Educational Requirements System)	Biological Science (General-Chemical officers only) Chemistry (General) Statistics Mathematics (General) Applied Science Physical Science (General) Computer Science

47–8. Army Acquisition Corps Reserve Component officers

a. The Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve have many Reserve officer positions in FA 51. Upon mobilization and during peacetime training assignments, officers assigned to these positions must be qualified to function as Army Acquisition officers. Accordingly, they must meet at least the minimum education, training and experience requirements of the Army Acquisition Corps at their respective grade levels. The Army Acquisition Corps represents the Total Army, both Active and Reserve Components (RC). The Army National Guard and Army Reserve contribute much to our Army Acquisition Workforce in day to day peacetime operations, during contingencies and in times of mobilization. These personnel must be certified acquisition professionals. The RC will be provided education, training and acquisition work experience opportunities comparable to that provided Active Component personnel. Differences in Active Component officers and RC officers will exist. One difference allows Acquisition RC officers to dual track rather than single track. This will allow RC Acquisition officers to acquire and maintain professional certification and provide a valuable pool of deployable assets for contingency operations. Much of the extensive and detailed career management guidance, such as progressive and exclusive acquisition assignments, minimum tour length, advanced schooling and prohibition from TOE command, cannot reasonably be applied to RC officer careers. Except for AAC officers who leave the Active Component and join the RC, it is not possible normally for RC officers to acquire 4 full years of acquisition experience in uniform. Reserve officers ordinarily acquire their acquisition expertise in their civilian careers, either in Government or industry. Granting equivalent credit based on civilian experience, coupled with recurring education under the DOD financed Defense Acquisition University (DAU) consortium of schools/courses, will allow the RC to maintain the professional acquisition workforce needed to support the Total Army and meet the legal requirements of DAWIA.

b. Eligible RC officers may compete for both PM positions at the lieutenant colonel and colonel level along with AC officers and AAC civilians. These RC officers will be slated off the OML to programs that support the RC.

c. The Reserve Component life cycle development model for FA 51 officers is shown at figure 47-2.

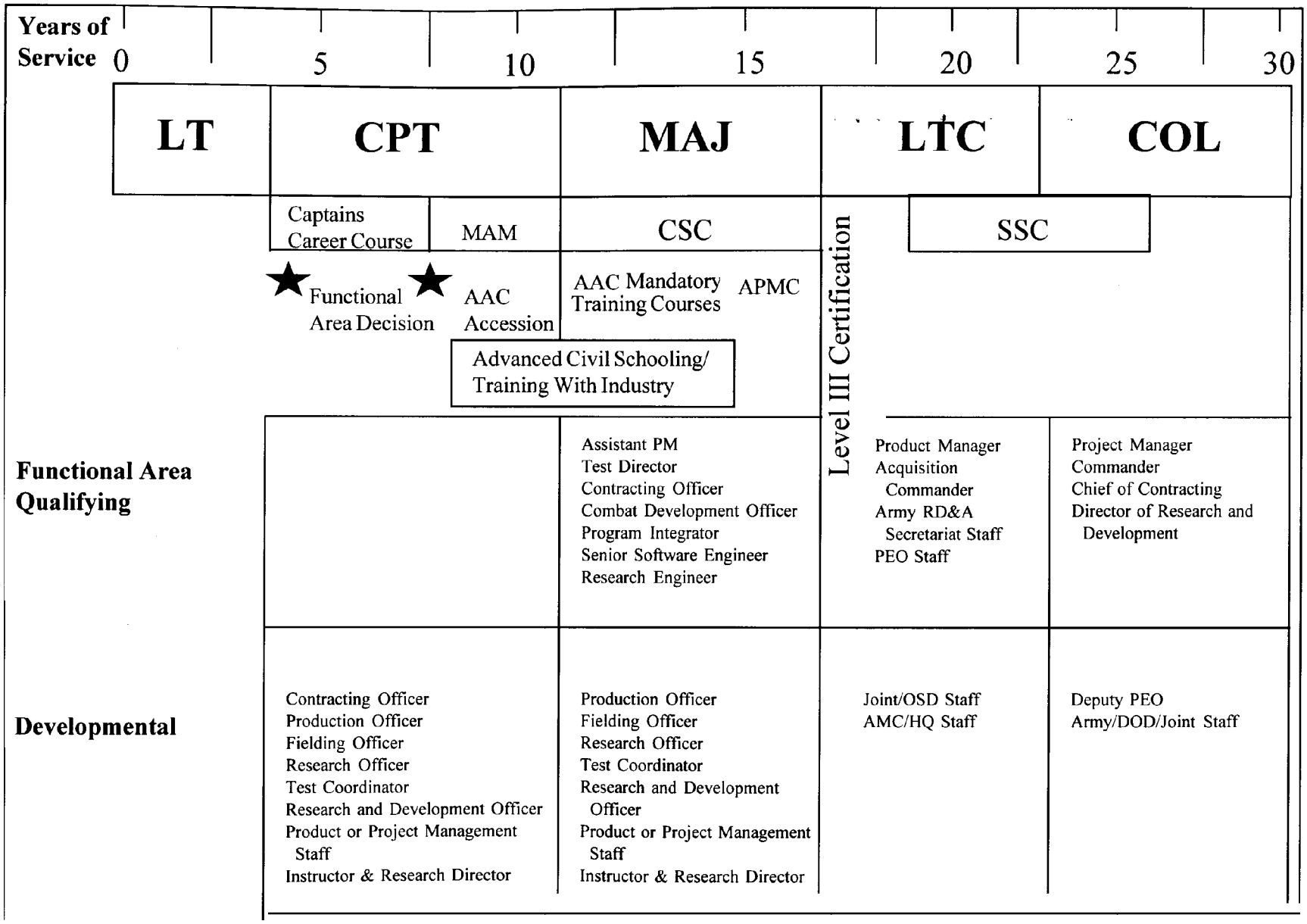

Figure 47-1. FA 51 life cycle development model (Active)

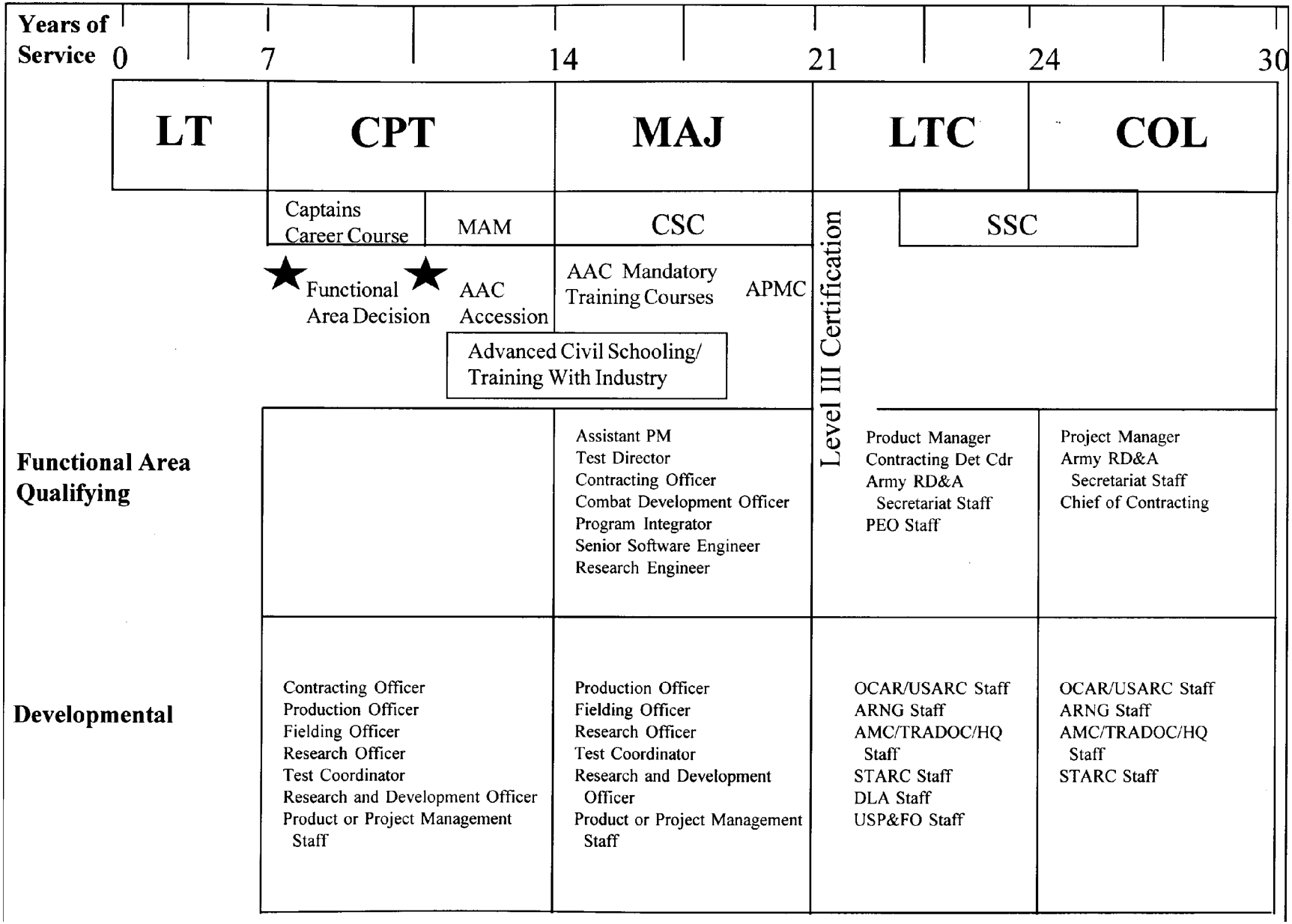

Figure 47-2. FA 51 life cycle development model (Reserve)